

Amendment to the Abstract:

The Abstract has been amended as indicated below. A revised Abstract is attached.

~~The present invention provides for a bone plate assembly utilizing at least one bone screw for fixation of adjacent bones of a spine including a base plate having at least one aperture extending therethrough and screw retaining mechanism mounted and movable on the plate between locked and unlocked positions relative to the aperture for preventing the bone screw from backing out from the base plate. The present invention also provides for a device for placement into an aperture of a base plate including a screw retaining mechanism mountable and movable on a plate between locked and unlocked positions relative to an aperture for preventing a bone screw from backing out from the base plate. Additionally, the present invention provides for a snap ring for placement into an aperture of a base plate including a screw retaining mechanism mountable and movable on the plate between locked and unlocked positions relative to the aperture for preventing a screw from backing out. Also, the present invention provides for a device for placement into an aperture of a base plate, wherein the aperture includes a pocket. Finally, the present invention provides for a bone plate assembly including at least one aperture extending therethrough, wherein the aperture is an elongated slot having a hole extending therethrough and walls forming a spherical seat a distance along a length of the slot to allow the screw to enter through the hole and screw retaining mechanism mounted and movable on the plate between locked and unlocked positions.~~

Attachment